

28 May 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence
SUBJECT : CIA/DIA Case Study on Projections

1. The attached study was prepared in accordance with Mr. Stoertz' memorandum of instruction on the preparation of a joint force projection on Soviet air defense interceptor aircraft. It would be feckless, I think, to draw any conclusions from this exercise that broad collaboration on force projections would be simple. In my view the basic question concerning resources required to involve ourselves in any significant way in the DIPP process has not changed. Nor has the question of benefit to CIA--or the needs of the US Government--been resolved.

2. In fairness I should point out that the particular OSR analysts who participated in this exercise, and the Branch Chief as well, did feel that their work probably would benefit from collaboration on major forces on a fairly regular basis, particularly in the maintenance of a single valued "best" projection. They agreed, however, that such a commitment could be costly in terms of analysts' and supervisors' time throughout the Office. From where I sit I simply do not see the slack in my resources to permit OSR's involvement much beyond what we have to do for NIE support.



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Director
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Report on the Experimental Joint CIA-DIA Projection

THE TASK

To prepare a joint CIA-DIA up-to-date "best" 10 year projection of the Soviet strategic defense interceptor force which could be used for an NIE and the DIPP, and to judge the costs and benefits of such a joint approach to force projections.

ASSUMPTIONS BEARING ON THE PROJECTIONS

- a. The ABM Treaty will remain in force, and any limitations placed on offensive forces will approximate those of the Interim Agreement.
- b. The Soviet view of the threat approximates the current US Five Year Defense Program and the current trends in NATO and Chinese forces.
- c. Neither the Soviet Union nor the United States becomes involved in a major conflict with each other or with other countries.

DISCUSSION

The Projections

The requested "best" projection is shown in the Table. There was general agreement on the projections, except as indicated below. Most of the initial disagreements did not represent differences of judgment, so much as lack of coincidence in two sets of numbers developed independently. All disagreements regarding the older systems were resolved on the basis of analysts' discussions.

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Costs and Benefits of the Joint Approach

No major difficulties were encountered in managing the experimental project or in assembling the various experts. Contacts between DIA and CIA representatives were on an informal basis, and the projections were made and positions formulated along expected lines. Actual work on the projections required about 3 man days in each Agency and administrative preparation of the report and briefing required 5 man days. It should be noted, however, that the interceptor forces in Soviet strategic defenses are one of the least contentious issues within the intelligence community. Projections of other forces about which there is serious disagreement would require considerably more effort on the part of the analysts, and respective agency positions would undoubtedly be subject to considerably more internal coordination.

One area of potential difficulty appears to be agreement on the initial assumptions. It is essential that requests for projections be stated precisely and with care. A request for a "best" projection, for example, should allow analysts maximum flexibility in formulating the assumptions which will drive the projection. A request for a projection to fit particular scenarios should fully explain the assumptions of the scenario. During the present exercise, the differences in philosophy underlying the projections in the DIPP and in the NIE presented only a potential difficulty. In the actual work, each analyst addressed the creation of a "best" estimate as requested, and work proceeded smoothly.

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FINDINGS

1. In this particular task the overall cost of eleven man-days does not seem excessive but--given the simplicity of the force--neither is it cheap. Extrapolation of the cost to cover coordination of all forces cannot be done on the basis of this one study.
2. This exercise differed little from the type of work done jointly by CIA and DIA in coordinating NIE projections. Under given agreed assumptions, and with a relatively non-controversial force element, work proceeded smoothly and was completed quickly.
3. In the projections at hand, disagreements were easily resolved when no significant judgmental differences were involved, and they were laid out when such differences did exist.
4. From the viewpoint of the analysts involved, annual joint reviews of force projections--either for the NIE or the DIPP--would furnish a useful framework for orderly working-level exchanges.
5. In DIA's view the cost of such force projections would not be incremental if they appeared in the NIE; if they appeared only in the DIPP, the costs would be incremental to CIA, but not to DIA.
6. In CIA's view, coordination of force projections in NIEs will continue to be sufficient for the needs of national intelligence, and any added costs of reviewing DIPP projections could add considerably to its workload without additional benefit to itself or its principal customers.
7. A large body of force projections would require the creation of a working group with an ongoing responsibility for those projections. The working group would require someone to be designated as chairman to facilitate the formulation of agreement and the settlement of disagreement, and to give direction to and expedite the working process. In CIA's case, each different force projection would call for a different working group member.

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8. In DIA's view, the best projections should be used as a common data base. Alternative projections and gaming iterations could be excursions from this basic data base. The basis for such alternatives and excursions should be explained.

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